

#### IV Social relation: the mechanism (Soziale Beziehung: Der Mechanismus)



# 1. The inner (internal, inside, inward) mechanism (Der innere Mechanismus)

## A. Outlook (View, Prospect) (Ausblick)

Under/As (the) “inner (internal, inside, inward) mechanism” of the social relation, we understand the interrelating (interrelated) mental acts, whose execution (carrying out, performance) for the coming (bringing) about and the course (sequence or order of events) of a social relation is constitutive (Unter „innerem Mechanismus“ der sozialen Beziehung verstehen wir die zusammenhängenden mentalen Akte, deren Vollzug für das Zustandekommen und den Ablauf einer sozialen Beziehung konstitutiv ist). These acts can be isolated in terms of theory, and observed as isolated, in the sense that they take place in the “interior (or inner world (dimension, space))” (on the “inside”; im „Inneren“), that is in the “spirit(-intellect)” or in the “psyche (mind, soul)” of every individual subject (also im „Geist“ oder in der „Psyche“ jedes einzelnen Subjekts), which – either way (anyway) – has a (takes) part (participates) in (partakes of) a social relation; that which we want to call the “outer (external, outside, outward) mechanism” of the social relation (den „äußeren Mechanismus“ der sozialen Beziehung), cannot, on the other hand/however, be described if, concurrently, the “inner (internal)” and “outer (external)” acts (die „inneren“ und „äußeren“ Akte) are not taken into consideration in connection (association) [[with one another as acts]] (in respect) of all the – either way (one way or another, anyway) – participants in the social relation. The mental acts constantly interwoven with one another, which make up the inner (internal)

relation of the social relation, are fundamentally (basically, in principle) two: namely, [[1]] the perception of the Other (other) as subjectivity, together with all the implications and imponderabilities (imponderables, incalculabilities) of this property (quality, characteristic), and [[2]](,) the putting oneself in (and or empathising with) the situation (or position) of the Other (Die miteinander stets verwobenen mentalen Akte, die den inneren Mechanismus der sozialen Beziehung ausmachen, sind grundsätzlich zwei: Nämlich die Wahrnehmung des Anderen als Subjektivität samt allen Implikationen und Unwägbarkeiten dieser Eigenschaft, und das Sichhineinversetzen in die Lage des Anderen), i.e. both in his (the Other's) "inner (internal)" as well as in his (the Other's) "outer (external)" situation (or position). Since the analysis of both these mental acts, which, for their part, consist (are made up (comprised, composed)) of a number of (multiple) individual acts, occurs (takes place) (with)in the social-ontological framework and with social-ontological intent, thus, it (this analysis) does not mean/signify an(y) indirect rehabilitation of that psychologism, which we wanted to avoid in (regard to) the description of the spectrum of the social relation. The inner (internal) mechanism of the social relation by no means depends – in regard to its general form-related (i.e. formal) course, which social-ontologically alone is worth considering (comes into question)<sup>i</sup> –, on the personal psychological properties (qualities, characteristics) of the I (ego, Ego) or of the Other (Alter (alter [= Latin])); it (the said inner mechanism) is in all human subjects in (regard to) its basic (fundamental) features (characteristics, traits, attributes), the same and – what will prove to be decisive (crucial) – it (also) does not vary in accordance with whether one stays (lingers, resides) in/ with the friendly or inimical half of the spectrum of the social relation; (the) joyous (people) and (the) melancholic(s) (people), (the) extroverted (people) (extroverts) and (the) introverted (people) (introverts), (the) "good" (people) and (the) "bad (evil)" (people), friends and foes(,) have to (must) make use of it equally, irrespective of what refinement or coarsening (oversimplification) it

(the said inner mechanism of the social relation) experiences or undergoes in every individual (person). Also, the unavoidable use/usage of psychological concepts must not here lead [[us]] to psychologistic false steps (missteps, indiscretions, lapses). Because these concepts are used as generally (universally) applicable formalities (i.e. formal/form-related (not with regard to content) starting points, as pertaining to forms, or, form-related lines of thought (formal constructs)), or as always present variables, which in accordance with the personal case can be bound to entirely different content(s); these contents (this content), which might concern ((pre)occupy, busy) the psychologists of (the) individual(s) and, if need be, the historian or the sociologist, are not taken into account here. However, already the handling of the inner (internal) mechanism of the social relation on the part of actors is not in the least all along (right down) the line psychologically oriented. As we shall yet see (see later/below), the mental “system”, which (the) actors erect (set (put) up, build, construct), in order to become (the) master (ruler, lord) of the original and never conclusively (definitively, finally) conquerable (defeatable, beatable) imponderability (incalculability) of the Other, spreads (stretches, extends) across (out over) several levels, in relation to which the subjectively meant meaning (sense) of alien/foreign act(ion)s (i.e. of the acts of others), just as (like) the objectively meant meaning (sense) of these same alien act(ion)s (i.e. acts of others), comes into consideration.

It must not especially (specifically) be explained that the “interior (or inner world (dimension, space))” (what is on the “inside”) as a synonym of the “mental (dimension or element (system))” (des „Mentalen“) merely constitutes a spatial metaphor, which is capable of a number of (several, multiple) interpretations, depending on how one wants to think of or imagine the psycho-physical nexus; fortunately (luckily), this thorny question can remain to be seen, i.e. left open, (with)in the social-ontological context. Likewise, it goes without

saying that talk of the “inner (internal)” and “outer (external)” mechanism of the social relation is to (should, ought to) be comprehended as a simplifying (simplified) abstraction, which appears to be suitable, convenient and expedient for reasons (purposes) of (re)presentation and description. The formation, development, extension and completion of both mechanisms accompany each other genetically and structurally, although important conceptual distinctions (differentiations), like e.g. that between social action and the social relation, ultimately rest (are based) on the contrast between inner (internal) and outer (external) processes (orders or sequences of events)<sup>1</sup>. Finally, we shall point out (refer to, indicate) a further objective interrelation between two conceptual abstractions, which, admittedly (mind you), seems to be far less self-evident, however, whose social-ontological relevance cannot be estimated highly enough. It is a matter of the manner with which the belonging together (togetherness or common bond) (shared (overlapping) (part of each other’s) identity) of the spectrum and of the mechanism of the social relation is to be thought about. We (have) already said that the mechanism of the social relation behaves (is) indifferent(ly) towards (regarding) friendship and towards (regarding) enmity, that (it), therefore, (it) (the mechanism of the social relation) is capable of supporting every shape and form, and every crystallisation inside of the spectrum of the social relation, without functionally determined (conditioned) resistance. However, it is not a matter here merely of a mutual (reciprocal) indifference, which stands in the way of any possibility of the development (unfolding) of the social relation. Rather, a mutual (reciprocal) determination (or dependency) and a deep organic intertwining (entanglement) are present (exist), which must find expression in the logical unity (or coherence (cohesion)) of their social-ontological (re)presentation and description. Not only does the constantly remaining-the-same (unchanging, unvarying) composition

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<sup>1</sup> See below Section 2Aa in this chapter.

or texture (die stets gleichbleibende Beschaffenheit) of the mechanism of the social relation constitute a necessary precondition (prerequisite, presupposition) for the enormous speed of movements in the spectrum of this same relation, which would turn out to be essentially more inflexible if every time (along) with the character of the relation, also that composition or texture, and consequently the constitution (die Verfassung) of man himself had to change (alter, vary). Still deeper perhaps do the breadth and flexibility of the spectrum of the social relation influence the mechanism itself. The latter (mechanism) is formed and developed in fact in the necessary-for-life (i.e. vital, essential) striving or endeavouring of the social actor to adapt and adjust himself – through constant and flexible movement – to the constant and flexible movement of the rest of the (on each and every respective occasion, relevant) actors on (along, as regards) the whole breadth of the spectrum of the social relation. As the development of all the possibilities of this spectrum presupposes the uniformity of the mechanism of the social relation, thus, for its part, the full activation of this mechanism presupposes that the social relation is dealt with not merely with regard to each and every respective actor standing across or opposite from an actor, but by bearing in mind all – apart from that (otherwise) – known possibilities of/for the development and unfolding of the social relation. The already existing background knowledge regarding the latter (social relation) constitutes the tacit starting point when it applies (is a matter/case) that one (an actor) will put oneself/himself in the position of (and or empathise with) the Other, and assess or appraise (estimate) which (what) place in the spectrum of the social relation the Other will occupy vis-à-vis the [[one's or the actor's own]] Ego – at any rate, the actions and reactions of the Other, without that background knowledge, can hardly be put into order and classified socially (Das schon vorhandene Hintergrundwissen über letztere bildet den stillschweigenden Ausgangspunkt, wenn es gilt, sich in die Lage des Anderen hineinzusetzen und abzuschätzen, welchen Platz im Spektrum der sozialen Beziehung der

Andere dem Ego gegenüber einnehmen werde - jedenfalls lassen sich Aktionen und Reaktionen des Anderen ohne jene Hintergrundwissen kaum sozial einordnen). The other way around (Conversely): the relation of the Ego towards (vis-à-vis) the Other (alter) is not merely shaped and moulded on the basis of what the Ego knows or can know about the Alter thanks to the mechanism of the taking on (over) and assumption of roles (role assumption (adoption)) (dank des Mechanismus der Rollenübernahme), but into the relation, all (things) (i.e. everything), – what(ever) the Ego in general knows about the possibilities of the development of the spectrum of the social relation, about the exchangeability of places in that (spectrum of the social relation) and about the character of the social relation –, flow(s) as a formative factor (i.e. factor of shaping and moulding; Gestaltungsfaktor). The socially mediated (re)presentation or notion of the spectrum of the social relation (Die sozial vermittelte Vorstellung von Spektrum der sozialen Beziehung) determines, in this respect, the inner (internal) mechanism of the same (social relation), and it is not at all essential to be familiar from one's own experience with all the places inside of the spectrum in order to jointly take them (the said places inside the spectrum of the social relation) into account (or in order to factor them in), in (regard to) the relation towards (vis-à-vis) the Other. It is, in the course of this, irrelevant with how much detail and how concretely the ego imagines the spectrum – that can, naturally, vary enormously from man to man (person to person/human to human). However, everyone has at his disposal an, in practice, sufficient image (picture) of his polarity and continuity, and makes use (avails himself) of the mechanism of the social relation, by putting oneself in (and or empathising with) the position of the Other, with regard to exactly this image or picture.<sup>ii</sup>

For that reason (That is why), from a new point of view, the objective and methodological meaning of the fundamental thesis, which we formulated and explicated in (regard to) the critical discussion of methodological individualism,



becomes recognisable. The individual social relation takes place only before the background of the fact of society and of the social in its totality (Die einzelne soziale Beziehung findet erst vor dem Hintergrund des Faktums der Gesellschaft und des Sozialen in seiner Gesamtheit statt)<sup>2</sup>. If there were only two human beings (creatures, entities) in the world, then it would hardly (barely) cross their mind to call their relation towards (as between or with) each other a *social* relation. And in view of the unavoidable narrowness of the spectrum of their relation, which no social experience would extend or expand (widen, broaden), the mechanism of the social relation would be reduced to the animal(bestial)-reflexive (würde sich auch der Mechanismus der sozialen Beziehung auf das Tierisch-Reflexive reduzieren). Only in the diachrony and the synchrony of society does the spectrum of the social relation unfold and develop fully, and this fully developed spectrum flows then via the processes of socialisation and (via) the individually stamped social experience as (a) formative factor (i.e. factor of shaping and moulding) into individual social relations and into the form-related (i.e. formal) remaining-the-same (unchanging, unvarying) mechanism of the social relation (über die Sozialisierungsprozesse und die individuell geprägte soziale Erfahrung als Gestaltungsfaktor in die einzelnen sozialen Beziehungen und in den formal gleichbleibenden Mechanismus der sozialen Beziehung ein). The fact of society is not of course, for its part, perceived as an undifferentiated whole, but as a plexus, network or mesh of relations, whose differentiation makes up exactly the spectrum of the social relation in its polarity and continuity (Das Faktum der Gesellschaft wird freilich seinerseits nicht als undifferenziertes Ganzes, sondern als Geflecht von Beziehungen wahrgenommen, deren Differenzierung eben das Spektrum der sozialen Beziehung in seiner Polarität und Kontinuität ausmacht). When the social subject forms an overall or a total judgement about/regarding

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<sup>2</sup> See Ch. II, Section 2Cc, cf. 3B, above.

society, and often uses (employs, utilises) it (the said overall or total judgement of society) as a guiding principle (guide) of/for it's (the social subject's) action (als Richtschnur seines Handelns), thus, it does not lose sight of, or touch with, the rich-in-variants spectrum of the social relation, its peripeteias/peripeteiae and imponderabilities or incalculabilities, but it identifies (equates) merely (simply) for some practical goal or purpose "society" with one of the forms of the relation (relational forms) existing in it ("society"). It (The said social subject) does that, again, as a rule, with (a) reservation(s) (proviso(s)) (conditionally), because it knows from social experience what could be in store ([[ironically:]] flourish and blossom) for those who do this without reservations (unconditionally), that is, (by) acting without the always new and always growing activity (actuation or operation) of the mechanism of the social relation whilst bearing (being borne) in mind (in respect of) all of the possibilities of development of the spectrum of the (this) same (social relation).

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## ENDNOTES –

**NOTHING TO DO WITH P.K.. DON'T FORGET, THE TRANSLATOR WAS BORN MORE THAN ONE THOUSAND YEARS AGO AND HAS GONE INSANE. DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME READING HIM AND HIS STUPID NOTES (THOUGHTS, COGITATIONS, RUMINATIONS).**

<sup>i</sup> I.e. social ontology only takes into consideration the inner mechanism of the social relation's formal (not content-related, psychological) course.

<sup>ii</sup> If one does not have some sort of idea what e.g. a "friend's" or "foe's" or "indifferent person's" position is in regard to one's own positioning, then one has not an – obviously to many different and varying degrees – a friend or foe or someone indifferent before him, as the case may be (on a case-by-case basis, of course).